

Office of the Surgeon General
Rockville MD 20857

DATE: December 3, 2004

TO: All Commissioned Corps Officers

FROM: Surgeon General

SUBJECT: Readiness Status

This is the seventh letter in a series regarding Commissioned Corps readiness.

Readiness is steadily becoming integral to our culture. For example, we hear of officers being reminded by their managers and supervisors of the importance of basic readiness and some have scheduled classes and seminars to assist in officer development. We know of several Commissioned Officer Association Branches that hold APFT sessions every month. We see readiness incorporated into the Corps' culture at the highest levels. I refer you to the recent PPM 05-003, which defines the Chief Professional Officer selection process. It says in part that nominees for CPO must meet Basic readiness requirements at the time of nomination. In other words, to be considered, potential leaders must show evidence that they are leading by example.

Promotions: For those of you who are up for promotion in 2005, you have just over 4 weeks before the end of the year, the deadline for you to meet basic readiness requirements to receive scoring for promotion. Don't delay. In addition to the time requirements of the President's Challenge program, some other requirements cannot be met overnight. Physical exams must be scheduled and completed, vaccinations or titers completed, a BLS course must be scheduled and completed, and the 12 training modules finished.

Recent Responses: The Commissioned Corps deployed a total of 640 officers to the Florida Hurricanes. To date in 2004, the Office of the Surgeon General has coordinated 46 separate deployments involving over 1,200 officers deployed and over 500 placed on stand-by status. If this order of magnitude continues, it is only logical to expect every Corps officer to meet Basic readiness so we can utilize any and all officers if necessary.

Planning for Responses: Planning for the next anticipated deployment, the Presidential Inauguration on January 20, 2005, has begun. We are working with the HHS Office of Public Health Emergency Preparedness, the Washington, D.C. Department of Health, D.C. Emergency Management Services, the Office of the Attending Physician in the U.S. Capitol, the Military District of Washington, the American Red Cross, and others. At this point, it appears that over 70 PHS officers may be involved.

To all of you who have shown leadership in meeting the readiness standards yourself, and then assisted others in their efforts, we owe you particular appreciation. Thank you again for accepting this challenge.

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